Farm and Garden

BUILDING A STONE FENCE.

Connecticut Farmer Tells How to Utilize Bowlders That Are In the Way.

One of the most picturesque sights in New England is the stone wall fence. The utilization of loose stones, which otherwise incumber the ground, for the construction of barriers necessary to farm life used to be a leading industry in New England before the advent of the barb wire fence. Even now many farmers extend their stone fences just to get rid of the rocks. And there are plenty of rocks in other parts of the country that can be used to the same useful purpose.

Here, however, is a brave farmer, F. H. Plumb of Tolland county, Conn., who goes further than picking up and piling stones. He believes in breaking up bowlders and using the fragments for fence material. Says Mr. Plumb:

An occasional bowlder here and there in a level, fertile field ought not to dishearten any robust, enthusiastic farmer from breaking them up and clearing them away. Dynamite, a sledge, a few chains and a steady yoke of oxen or team of horses will work wonders in a short time in many a field.

A knowledge of rocks, however, will prove of great assistance before work of any kind with them is undertaken. Some are apparently as hard as flint; others so soft they can almost be crushed between the fingers. Some have a grain similar to a log so they may be split by wedges and half rounds quite straight and true. Others will hammer or split into all sorts of forms and sizes. But there are few stones a stone mason cannot trim into any form he desires.

If we closely examine a bowlder, say, three to six feet long, we may notice it has a grain its entire length and all the way through.

A STONE WALL FENCE.

I noticed my stonemason would take a drill twelve inches long and three-quarters of an inch in diameter and, with a two or three pound hammer mounted on a twenty inch handle, drill a hole six inches deep in the bowlder in a few minutes, depending on the hardness of the stone. Then along the same seam of the rock another hole was drilled, and perhaps another and another, these holes being about six inches apart.

Half rounds and a wedge were then inserted in each hole, the wedges gently started, and then the entire length of wedges driven home evenly by means of a twelve pound sledge. With this treatment the big hard rocks seemed to generally split evenly and straight through. If they did not, after the rock was split a few heavy blows with the big sledge would knock off any protruding pieces.

But there is a knack in knocking a stone to pieces or trimming the stone with the side of a sledge hammer or of its cutting edge that takes time, thought and observation to acquire.

My job was this: Extending easterly along the roadway from my house was an old tumble down wall that was the most unsightly place to my family on the entire farm. The land inside the wall is about ideal for a rank growth of timothy, and plenty of stones of all sizes, from a pebble to enormous bowlders, were there.

The smaller bowlders, such as a yoke of cattle could draw on a stone boat, and all the smaller stones the boys and myself had picked off after the plowing of the past three springs and hauled along the wall. Of course this made the old wall look even worse than before, and all sorts of weeds and brush began to grow up among it.

As the wall lay, it was made up of stones of all sizes, many so big they had to be split or broken and used as foundation pieces before work could be begun.

Ordinarily for a new wall a strip is plowed and dug out just below the frost line. As my wall was only to be rebuilt this was unnecessary, for I had a good foundation.

My wall was laid with a straight face on the road side, while on the field side rough cobbles without a straight face were set up at a slant of about one foot to the four foot wall.

In no part of the wall were the stones just thrown or dumped in. Every stone was placed one at a time, no matter how small, and so placed that it rested firmly on its base, with as little tipping or looseness as possible.

A wall put up in this careful manner ought to last several generations.

Record Corn Yield.

In a corn growing contest in North Carolina 227 bushels were grown on one acre. It is believed that this breaks official records in this country.

Her Sad Finish.

"Did you ever know a girl to die for love?"

"Yes."

"Did she just fade away and die because some man deserted her?"

"No. She just took in washing and worked herself to death because the man she loved married her."—Houston Post.

A Helping Hand.

Mistress (hurrying frantically)—Mary, what time is it now? Maid—Half past 2, mum. Mistress—Oh, I thought it was later. I still have twenty minutes to catch the steamer. Maid—Yis, mum. I knew ye'd be rushed, so I set the clock back thirty minutes to give ye more time.—Puck.

WHEN PLANTS ARE FROZEN.

Hints on Restoring Window Garden Flowers to Health.

During the winter the amateur in gardening has much to contend with, and not the least of the evils is frost, especially where an endeavor is made to keep more or less tender plants through the cold, dull months in a poorly heated greenhouse or frame.

Fortunately science has come to our aid and taught us a few things concerning the effects of frost on tender plants, and with these principles fully grasped we are in a position to combat frost. Plants which are kept as dry as possible during a spell of frosty weather without being allowed to suffer from this cause will withstand successfully far more frost than the same kind of plants whose tissues are gorged with liquid, and science has also taught us that the greatest mischief is caused by rapid thawing.

To grasp the above facts it may be as well before proceeding further to just consider briefly what really happens when a plant gets frozen. It is now generally known that a plant, like the human body, is made up of tiny cells, each of which, of course, has its own walls. Under ordinary conditions and when a plant has abundance of moisture at its disposal these cells are turgid with liquid. Now, when liquid becomes frozen it is one of the laws of nature that expansion takes place, and in the case of that in the plant cells no exception to this law is made. This expansion, then, results in a rupture of the plant cell walls, which under ordinary conditions of thawing causes the plant to collapse.

It has been proved that when a plant is thawed very slowly the plant cells are able to absorb the moisture which has been forced by expansion through the cell walls, and the rupture is to a great extent made good.

Assuming that the plants have not been watered more often than is absolutely necessary and that one morning we visit the greenhouse or frames to find that frost has reached them, we know that if they are to be saved thawing must be done very slowly. First of all, we must take care that the heating apparatus, if any is used, does not get into working order again, and if there is any likelihood of a burst of sunshine shade the structure with thick mats or anything else that can be quickly secured. Then procure an abundant supply of ice cold water and syringe or otherwise drench the plants with this until frost is gradually removed from the tissues. This will probably mean very cold hands and chattering teeth, but it is either this or losing the plants. For several days subsequently the plants should be kept as cool as possible without allowing frost to reach them again.

PATENTS NEW HAY PRESS.

Makes Two Bales at Time and Averages Six Hundred Bales a Day.

Theodule Guidry, a resident of Church Point, La., who for many years has been interested in farming and improving the devices used by farmers, has received a patent on a new double baler hay press. This press is unique in its construction, having done away with the large springs ordinarily in use on such balers and decreased the draft to a minimum. Experiments with models have demonstrated a capacity of fifty or sixty bales an hour.

It is constructed with a baling chamber on both ends of the press and compresses the hay by a plunger working on a crank shaft past the feed box on each end. The crank shaft is connected to a beam to which one horse is hitched for power, and at each round of the horse a stroke is made on two different bales, one on each end. It is possible with this model to get a bale of any desired weight, the same being controlled by two springs attached to a movable side of the baler which regulates the compression of bales.

Mr. Guidry says he thinks the baler will beat anything on the market for speed and simplicity, and he is now negotiating with manufacturing companies for its construction and sale.

Orchards Worth $1,000 Per Acre.

A feature at a recent fruit show was an exhibit of Nova Scotia apples and a printed statement showing the profits of fruit growing in that province, especially in the Cornwallis and Annapolis provinces. The average estimate of cultivating, fertilizing, spraying and pruning per acre was $25, and the cost of picking and packing the fruit is estimated at 50 cents per barrel. The yield reported from eight to ten orchards shows an average for the past five years of from 100 to 165 barrels of shipping apples per acre, sold at an average price varying from $1.90 to $2.50 per barrel during the five years. The gross returns per acre range from $190 to $304 and the net returns from $117 to $219. The average net returns for all the orchards for the five years were $174 per acre, a sum sufficient to pay 15.75 per cent on $1,000. Accordingly a valuation of $1,000 per acre for these orchards seems not excessive.

Quick Improvement of Sweet Corn.

As a result of several years' selection Nelson S. Stone of Massachusetts reported last season sweet corn which matured nearly a week earlier than other early kinds which he had tried, and the ears were almost double the size of other early varieties. The improvement was made by choosing the earliest ears and then using those grains that grew on the middle of the cob and then still further selecting the largest and best shaped grains.

Religion In Holland.

The following incident was told me by Lecky in somewhat whimsical illustration of his belief that if religion were to die out of all other European nations it would still survive in Holland: A Dutch peasant was in sore straits about the impossibility of making his hens observe Sunday. He came to his pastor with a present of eggs. He regretted, he said, that he could not prevent his hens from laying these on the Sabbath, but he made what amends he could by giving them to God's minister that they might be handed over to the poor and infirm.—"Old and Odd Memories."

SMALL FORTUNES IN TREES.

Hints to Farmers Who Are Prone to Cut Up Fine Logs For Fuel.

Today there are comparatively few pioneer farms which must be cleared out of the forest, but there are many which still possess enough timber for fuel cutting and for commercial uses on a limited scale. In the light of recent warnings as to the menace of a scarcity of timber in the future, farmers need not be admonished to avoid useless waste of trees. The average farmer does most of his tree cutting in the winter when he has time to do the work. But perhaps the average farmer has not considered the commercial value of his trees.

TREE CUTTING ON THE FARM.

The writer spent some time at a small hotel in a village in southeastern Missouri a few years ago and was delighted with the big open fireplace in the hotel office. Roaring fires were built therein, and it was good to sit in front or at the side and watch the flames suck upward. Only wood was burned—no coal—and that made the real delight of the open fire.

One day the writer saw the hotel man bring in several huge log cuts and dump them by the fireplace. The landlord put on a log now and then and achieved a fine fire. The burning logs threw off a faint, peculiar scent which seemed familiar—a memory of boyhood. Investigation discovered that the log cuts were of splendid, perfect walnut—one of the scarcest woods nowadays. Any big walnut tree is worth many dollars more for cabinet work than for fuel, as it would seem almost anybody should know by this time. That man burned up about $200 worth of walnut.

It is well always to bear in mind that the fine big tree you are cutting down and cutting up for fuel or fence rails possibly might bring you as much as a load of wheat or corn if you would haul it to the nearest market.

Homemade Feed Mixing Box.

"There's always plenty of work on the farm," as the hired man said when his city cousin asked him how he managed to pass his time in winter when the nonfarming season was on. The hired man spoke gospel truth, as every farmer knows. But there are ways of making the work easier, winter as well as summer. Some farmers do many things in a haphazard, slipshod way, just as their ancestors used to do them, and never take the trouble to think up more modern methods. By this neglect they cause themselves much extra work.

MIXING STOCK FEED.

A certain farmer in Indiana whose neighbors mix feed for the stock in the old laborious way, simply pouring water from a bucket into the mixture and stirring it, has contrived a very simple but handy arrangement for mixing feed. He found an old flat box which had been used years before for mixing mortar when the farmhouse was rebuilt. Rains of several seasons had washed out all vestiges of clinging lime. From the well in his back yard he ran a flume of two inch wooden pipe which had been used formerly for draining a marshy place. With his boy pumping at the well the farmer has a constant stream of water flowing into his mixing box while he stirs the feedstuffs. Into a sack near at hand goes the mixed and moistened feed, ready to serve, and this Indiana man says the cows surely do like it put up that way.

A Calamity.

Tammas (to McTavish, whom he has just pulled out of the water)—Man, Donal', ye sud be lookin' happy! Are ye no' thankfu' yer life's saved? McTavish (sourly)—I dinna see nae cause to be thankfu'. The glass o' whisky I had afore I fell intil the water's gotten fair drooned!—London Tit-Bits.

Their Turn Out.

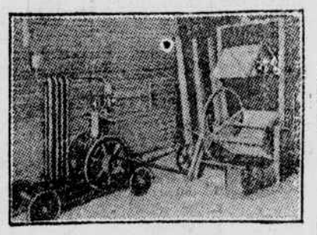
Ella—They had a very smart turnout. Bella—Indeed? Ella—Yes; they were ejected from one of the best hotels in the town.

POWER CONCRETE MIXER.

Homemade Device That Is Useful on the Farm.

Of interest to farmers who need cement for any purpose, such as laying floors or walks or making posts, is a bulletin issued by the Colorado experiment station which tells of mixing concrete by machinery and prints the accompanying illustration of a homemade mixer, which is described thus:

Two pieces of 4 by 6 form the sills. Upon these two, uprights about three feet high are fastened. A one and one-half inch pipe passes through holes bored in the top of the uprights. Upon this pipe the mixing box is turned, and through the pipe the water is added to the mixture at the desired time. The water is poured in at the top of the upright pipe and flows down and out through holes which are drilled in the lower side of it. The other end of the pipe is closed by a wooden plug.



POWER CONCRETE MIXER.

The ends of the box are made of pieces of 2 by 8 bolted together. A hole bored in the center of each end forms the bearings. The sides of the box are made of one inch lumber and are simply nailed to the ends with twelvepenny nails. One-half of the box is made so that it can be detached and lifted off when the mixer is to be filled or emptied. The detachable half is secured to the other half by means of strong hooks so placed that by slipping this half about an inch to one side all of the hooks are loosened at once. After it is in position the removable portion is held in place by means of a barn door latch.

The driving gear is simple, but very effective. It consists of the rim taken from the wheel of an old rubber tire buggy. With the tire removed the grooved rim makes a very satisfactory wheel upon which to run a three-quarter inch rope belt. The belt is driven by a small sheave pulley, which is fastened to the countershaft. A belt tightener is used upon the rope, and by using a very loose belt the tightener is made to act as a friction clutch. This particular mixer is driven by a two horse gasoline engine, which is belted to the countershaft. The engine runs continuously, and the mixer is started and stopped by means of the belt tightener.

Many other systems of driving might have been used in place of the rope belt. The main gear of an old self binder makes an excellent gear for a mixer. An old mower gear may also be put to good use in this connection. It is not necessary to have the mixer driven by an engine or horse power. A crank may be attached and the machine turned by hand. Many prefer turning such a machine rather than mixing the concrete with a shovel.

CITY MEN FOR FARMS.

Many Would Make Good Hired Hands if They Had Chance.

Many farmers throughout the country find it a difficult matter to get hired hands, while in the great cities there are thousands of men out of work. The problem of inducing some of the down and outs of city life to go out on the farms is claiming the attention of social students.

A commission of the New York legislature recently has been making an inquiry into the matter, though it has not taken up the subject exhaustively. John Mitchell, the noted labor leader, was present at one of the sessions and made suggestions.

The chief trouble seems to be that those in the cities who are always deep in poverty know nothing of country life, seldom if ever having seen the green fields. They were born to their conditions and know nothing else.

Thousands of these men, no doubt, if they should be taken out and given jobs on farms would return to the city as soon as they earned money enough. That is because the city sights and sounds have become second nature to them. They would pine for the filth and furore of their native element.

But, on the other hand, there is no doubt that many men in the cities would welcome a chance to get away to the country for themselves and their families and would develop into excellent farm hands. The problem is to put these men in touch with farmers who need them.

Diseases of Fowls.

Most of the diseases that afflict fowls are the result of carelessness and indifference on the part of the owner as regards the surroundings and conditions of his poultry. No poultry will show to advantage on the credit side of the cash account unless they are healthy and well cared for. How to prevent disease should be the watchword rather than how to cure disease.

Beef and Dairy Cattle.

When a dairyman has faced the actual practice of selling cows from his herd for beef he will not feel encouraged over the outlook of combining beef and dairy qualities in the same herd. There is a popular prejudice against eating beef from an old, played out dairy cow, and there is no advantage in trying to combine the two qualities in one animal.

A Long Felt Want.

An American once went to Windsor castle and insisted upon seeing Queen Victoria. He was told that it was quite impossible, as an audience with the queen could be had only by appointment. Still he persisted, and then they told him flatfooted that before seeing the queen he must state the object of his visit. He said he wanted to show her a new piece of furniture, a throne bed—a perfect throne by day and a perfect bed by night.

Anger is a stone cast into a wasps' nest.—Malabar Proverb.

On Lifting Cats and Rabbits.

It is a mistaken idea that the proper way to lift a full grown cat is by the nape of its neck without supporting the lower part of its body with the other hand. It is true that the mother cat carries young kittens by grasping in her mouth the loose skin at the back of her offspring's neck, but a tiny kitten is a very different matter from a large cat, and, indeed, the only way to lift a kitten without squeezing or hurting its soft little body is to lift it by its neck. But after it has grown larger its own weight is too great to be supported by such a bit of skin and fur as is so grasped by the hand, and many a cat suffers perfect tortures by being held in this manner and is quite helpless to run or struggle, as in such a position certain of its muscles cannot be controlled, and it is absolutely at the mercy of its unconscious tormentor.

The same rule should be observed in lifting rabbits by their ears. They should always be partially supported by the free hand and not allowed to dangle with their whole weight straining from their large but necessarily delicate ears.—Watchword.

More Than One Way.

The caller, a man whom he had known in the old town back in Pennsylvania, had dropped in to talk old times with the busy lawyer, and the lawyer had endured it patiently for an hour and a half. Then, unseen by the caller, he pushed a small knob at the end of his desk, and a bell rang in the adjoining room.

"Excuse me a moment, Mr. Hockensplutter," he said, stepping into the other room and proceeding to hold this one sided conversation over an imaginary telephone:

"Hello!"

"— — — — —."

"Yes."

"— — — — —?"

"No, Bertha, I'll not have time to come home for dinner. It's already 4:30, and I have several hours' work yet to do. I am very busy and have been detained."

"— — — — —."

"Yes. Goodby!"

Then he went back to his desk. But Mr. Hockensplutter had already risen to go.—Chicago Tribune.

That Genius Whistler.

Of Whistler Lady St. Helier in "Memories of Fifty Years" writes thus: "He was a genius and had all the defects and qualities of one. To him everything was a joke, the subject of a bonmot. The lightest and daintiest of persiflage was what he excelled in, and one never had a dull moment in his company. He was always late for dinner, arranging the immortal lock of gray hair in its proper place as he came into the room, with apologies and excuses, none of them true—of which he was perfectly conscious and also of the fact that his host and hostess knew that they were not. Wherever he was there would be a circle listening to him, and his ringing laugh would be heard all over the room as he sent his shafts right and left into the joints of the armor of those who were attacking him. It was a great surprise and almost a shock when he appeared as a benedict."

How Eskimos Measure Time.

Writing of the Eskimo methods of measuring time in a region of six months day or night, Harry Whitney in Outing says:

"The Eskimo divides his periods into 'sleeps,' but a sleep does not designate by any means the civilized measure of day and night. It is, in fact, a very uncertain term. Often we traveled from twenty to thirty hours without rest. Now there was no night, and I so far lost count of time that I was not at all certain of dates. Our single marches with the succeeding 'sleep' not infrequently covered a full forty-eight hours, or two ordinary days. The object of these extended marches was to take advantage of good weather and general conditions or because no safe or convenient camping place presented itself in the interim."

Two of a Kind.

There is something about the character of mules that makes their owners at times almost equally stubborn. In the Washington Star this dialogue concerning one if not two such animals is reported:

"Why don't you get rid of that mule?"

"Well, suh," answered Erastus Pinkley, "I hates to give in. If I was to trade that mule off he'd regard it as a personal victory. He's been tryin' foh de las' six weeks to get rid o' me."

An Injustice.

When George III. first met Sir John Irwin, a thirsty soul, he remarked facetiously, "They tell me, Sir John, you're fond of a glass of wine."

"Your majesty," gravely responded the courtier, "your informants do me a great injustice. They should have said a bottle."—St. Louis Republic.

He Remembered.

Wife (revisiting the scene of her betrothal)—I remember, Algernon, so well when you proposed to me how painfully embarrassed you were. Algernon—Yes, dear, and I remember so well how kind and encouraging you were and how easy you made it for me, after all.—London Tit-Bits.

Experience.

"Experience would be a wonderful asset but for one thing."

"What's that?"

"You can never sell it for what it cost you."

A small bag cannot be made to contain what is large. A short rope cannot be used to draw water from a deep well.—Chinese Proverb.

Would Be Taken Care Of.

"I fear I am not worthy of you."

"Never mind about that," responded the young lady with the square jaw. "Between mother and myself I imagine we can effect the necessary improvements."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Medium.

"Papa, what is the person called who brings you in contact with the spirit world?"

"A bartender, my son."—Exchange.

Turtle and Farina.

Turtle and farina taken together represent to those who live on the Amazon, be they white, negro or Indian or one of the numerous crossbreeds, what the salmon does to the Alaska Indian, the cocoanut to the south sea islander and rice to the Mongolian. A short run of salmon in the Alaska rivers, a crop failure in the paddy fields of China, a hurricane in the south sea islands, all reduce to the same thing—famine. On the Amazon a shortage of turtles may be tided over by a plentitude of farina, or vice versa. A failure of both turtles and farina in the same year brings great and widespread distress. Farina is a crude, locally made product of the root of the manioc, a further refinement of which results in the tapioca of commerce. Tapioca is the pure starch of the root, farina the starch mixed with a woody fiber, the latter imparting a yellowish color to the compound. Farina under a number of different names is more or less of a staple with the natives in all of tropical America from the West Indies to Paraguay.—Los Angeles Times.

In Wild Wales.

Tourist—Good morning, my pretty maid. Whose sheep are these?

Shepherdess—They belong to Mr. Goronwy Cadwaladr, sir.

T.—Oh, a very nice name too! And where does he live?

S.—At Tre'rgeifrgwyllt ion.

T.—Have you been much from home?

S.—Only in Anglesey, sir. I went with my brother and my sister to Llanerchymeddymmondo and from there to see Creigiau Crugyll and came back to Llanfairmathafarneithaf, and then—

T.—Hold hard! Let me breathe a little! Well, where afterward?

S.—Well, my brother had to go back to Chwarel Caebraichycafn and my sister to Llanaelhaiarn, but on our way home we went to see the little church by the river—such a funny old fashioned church, sir.

T.—Where is it? I mean what parish?

S.—In Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgagerychwyrndrobwllty siliogogogoch.

T.—Mercy on us! That's enough! However shall I find such a place?—London Spectator.

It is difficult to say who do you the most mischief, enemies with the worst intentions or friends with the best.—Lytton.